

Overlooked Signs: Christ will Return

April 8 & 11, 2010

John 14:1-6

- Lia getting pulled over, I'm a jerk

- What gets to me: politics, health care debate, sports, bad service at restaurants, pepsi products, really hot weather, waiting in line, people who do stupid stuff, Nick Jr.,

Out of all the things that Jesus asked us to do: love your enemies, make disciples, be light, be salt, serve one another, be kind to one another, show compassion to one another...perhaps the most difficult command in all of Jesus' words to his disciples came in a very troubling time...at the Passover meal...

Tonight, we are going to rewind a bit from where we've been. Last week we spent time on the disciples passover meal with Jesus, and I want to look at a conversation he had with them.

I know, I know....last week we said we would talk about Christ' return...

- Not addressing the millennial viewpoints - they don't change our jobs... preparing others for Jesus' return!
- Don't know about times and dates
- We have to be careful about locking ourselves in to these theories and interpretations...remember the first advent? How Jesus came the first time?

Instead of talking about all our ideas about how, what and when...I want us to understand, why? Why does the bible speak of Jesus' return? One scholar said that for every verse that speaks about the first coming, there are 8 verses that speak about the Second coming! But, why?

John 14:1-6

1) "Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.

- This is a command, not a word of encouragement!

- Reasons for the disciple's hearts to be troubled:

- 1) hopes of earthly kingdom dashed
- 2) Jesus said he was leaving
- 3) Concern for the future
- 4) Peter gets called out...

- But Jesus says, "don't let your hearts be troubled...trust him!", so that means everything is going to be fine, life will be merry and joyful, no problems, no issues, no troubles...

The guys around this table, with the exception of one...will die ugly, painful deaths because of their faith and TRUST in Jesus...

- Peter - crucified head down,
- Andrew, son of a John & brother of Peter - severely scourged & tied by ropes on x-shaped cross where he hung 2 days to expire
- James, beheaded with sword;
- Philip, crucified
- Bartholomew, beaten/flayed, and crucified head down
- Thomas, lanced by idolatrous priests & burned up in an oven
- Matthew, axed to death with a halberd
- James (son of Alphaeus), thrown down from the Temple tower & not dead so clubbed to death with a fullers club at age 94
- Jude, crucified
- Simon the Zealot, crucified

- Trust in God and just as you trust in Him, you can trust ME! You don't see God, but you trust...and in a little bit, you won't see me...TRUST!

- Its not that these guys, or that we, won't face trials, sufferings, sickness & death...no, its that we trust God and Jesus, that they've got it all figured out!

- We talk about Crosley Tours often...mission trips that our church body take...I'm going to be training pastors in Panama in about a month, I've got some work to do...got to prep some things...but ultimately I don't know much about the trip, what time do we go from place to place, where we are staying, who we will meet, what days hold what for me...I trust Dan for that stuff. Some of you aren't made that way...you have to know all the details...it's one thing for our earthly trips...but when Jesus says, "Don't let your hearts be troubled, TRUST ME."

2) There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?

- Whenever we read this, sometimes we get the idea that Jesus is going back to being a carpenter, building homes and mansions in the sky.

- He's got a work crew: Noah, Nehemiah, who else?

- Wow, he's been gone almost 2000 years, Heaven's going to be awesome!

- No

- His preparation of this place is work that will be done on the cross, in the grave and through the resurrection.

- Do you have a place that when you think about it...it puts your heart at ease, you get excited about going? Every year, my family loads up towards the end of summer and heads down to a cabin in Northern Arkansas on a lake.

- That first day on the water...all my troubles and cares start to fade

- By Thursday...I start thinking about the weekend again...by Friday...I'm ready to head back, I've got to much to do!

- Jesus is giving us a picture of an eternal home AND an eternal REST! And, its his Father's home!

3) *When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.*

- When the time is right!
- In this troubled world, we can put our trust in Jesus, that ultimately we will be with him!
- 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

4) *And you know the way to where I am going.*

- Some people say that Jesus was saying this to draw out the question that follows.
- Others understand that Jesus has been sharing with them over and over again about his mission, about who he is and what he would accomplish.

5) *"No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"*

- Many people punish Thomas for his doubts, but he's the only one brave enough to ask the questions everyone else is thinking!
- His question is answered with one of the most vital, pivotal, statements in all the world.
- We've preached it again and again...and the world HATES IT!! People deny it!
- The answer to this question causes the world to look at Christians as hateful, bigoted, mean spirited, intolerant...shall I go on.

6) *Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.*

- If you've not already, underline, circle, star this verse!
- Jesus spoke this to his disciples...to say, to command...Let not your hearts be troubled!
- Every other faith is filled with trouble...working your way into the graces of God or a god...you are constantly in that uneasy state of "am I pleasing God?"
- The reality is, that as Christians...our hearts should not be troubled, not when it comes to what God thinks about us and where we will end up in the future...

Jesus says, I have a place for you!

Jesus says, I am always with you!

So, what happens if you are able to put your trust in Jesus, knowing he's got it all taken care of...things don't shake you up as much?

#1 - Our spirit and emotions will be stable

- not saying you won't cry, get angry, get down
- but, it will be for the right things at the right time

#2 - Our relationships will get better

- most relationship problems, friendships, relatives & MARRIAGES stem from troubled hearts...we try and repair the relationship or the other person, when really, it is us that needs repaired, our hearts.
- There are grown men in this room whose mummies can still jerk their tails...

#3 - Our witness will be more effective

- when the world watches you and I go through things and our hearts are not troubled, but filled with trust in Jesus...its always a wow for others.
- The early church grew through persecution for this very reason! Nothing shook them, stoning, burning, killing, torturing...nothing!
- We look at the status of our 401k's and cuss!
- We look at health care, economy, the Colts and people watch us get as troubled as anyone...

You see, we've been talking about "Overlooked Signs", and I believe that something that gets overlooked...is your heart. You are a sign that Jesus will return someday! Your heart! Your Spirit! You!

I know that Jesus has a place for me, that he is always present in my life, that someday...I will be with him forever. Whether I pass from this life to the next...or He returns...I trust in God, I trust in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

"16) That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. 17) For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! 18) So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever."